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CHRISTIANITY

AND

BIBLICAL CRITICISM:

A PAPER,

READ BEFORE THE ST. JOHN CLERICAL ASSOCIATION,
MARCH 11TH, 1890.

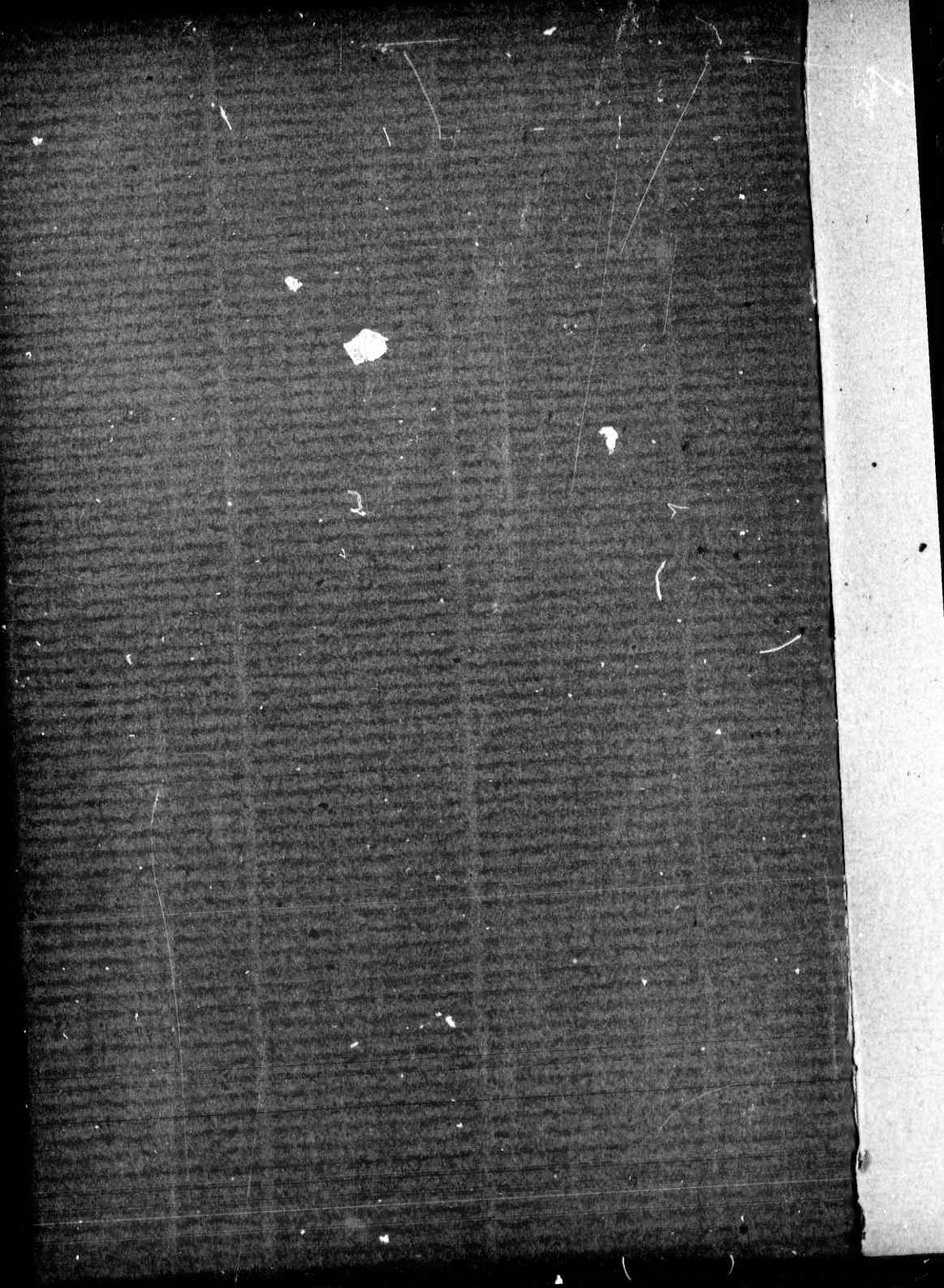
BY

THE REV. J. DE SOYRES, M.A.

Rector of St. John's Church.

Published at the request of the Members.

SAINT JOHN, N. B.
J. & A. McMILLAN, 98 PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.
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ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΟΚΙΜΑΖΕΤΕ· ΤΟ ΚΑΛΟΝ ΚΑΤΕΧΕΤΕ.

(1 Thess. v. 21.)

“Coeleste depositum, quod Deus a Mosis tempore usque ad apostolos per pensa subinde explicatiora non frustra dedit, servant, qui optima quaeque probent. Tum, si quis subsidii quidpiam ad salutarem Scripturae tractationem praesenti opere sibi praestare posse existimat, eo velim in gloriam DEI et in suam aliorumque aedificationem, mihi bene precatus, utatur.”

(Bengel, *Praef. in Gnom. N. T.*)

“The only question concerning the authority of Scripture is, whether it be what it claims to be, not whether it be a book of such sort, and so promulged, as weak men are apt to fancy.”

(Butler, *Analogy, Part II., ch. 3.*)

TO THE MOST REVEREND THE METROPOLITAN OF CANADA.

MY LORD,—I dedicate to you a brief essay upon a topic now occupying the attention of the whole Church. The essay was read at the first meeting of our Clerical Association in this city, and it was the desire of my brethren that it should be published. I hesitated long before compliance with this request, and I have at last assented with the hope that the weighty utterances of those great scholars and teachers whom I quote may be helpful to those who are now considering the subject of Biblical Criticism, and the attitude which the Church should adopt towards its claims. As so many of our hard-worked clergy are forced to depend on second-hand information, and often upon the biassed utterances of party newspapers, there is imminent danger that some may be led to adopt hasty conclusions, whether rash acceptance of new theories, or as hasty condemnation of that which they have not proved. You, my Lord, will give to us your guidance in this as in all other difficulties; but you will not deem it presumptuous that one of the least of your subordinates has ventured to speak, not with any claim for personal hearing, but as the echo of beloved teachers, some now gone before to their reward and rest, memories which begin in boyhood with Canon Cook and Archdeacon Allen, unswerving champions of conservative scholarship; of Döllinger at Munich enlightening the page of Church history, and the aged Tholuck at Halle, in his last years, vindicating

the inspiration of Holy Scripture; of Lightfoot (ὁ μακαρίτης) and his colleagues at Cambridge; and of one other, most beloved of all, their contemporary and equal, whose words conclude this essay.

May the prayer of the great Christian scholar Bengel, which I have transcribed, be fulfilled even in this humblest effort in the same great cause of "rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

I remain, my Lord, .

Obediently and affectionately,

JOHN DE SOYRES.

ST. JOHN, N. B., May 4, 1890.

CHRISTIANITY AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

[The portion included in brackets was omitted, for the sake of brevity, during the reading of the paper.]

THE first meeting of an Association intended to promote "free discussion of subjects connected with the life and work of the Church," imposes a double embarrassment upon the member entrusted with the duty of selecting a subject, and opening the debate. In the first place, he has to make choice amid the almost innumerable topics which suggest themselves; in the second place, to arrive at what mathematicians would call the function of two variables, namely the measure of the topic's general interest, and of his own personal capacity for dealing with it. As I am merely the opener of a general discussion, and in no way offer myself as the instructor of my brethren, it is sufficient to claim that the former of these elements is of unquestionable strength.

For the last generation in the English Church, ever since the publication of "Essays and Reviews" in 1860, and Bishop Colenso's work on the Pentateuch, questions of Biblical Criticism have occupied the attention of theological students. Some of us are old enough to remember the alarm and indignation which these crude and ill-digested works naturally aroused. I remember hearing the Dean of Exeter, preaching in his Cathedral pulpit, denounce the appointment of his diocesan, Dr. Temple, as

the eternal disgrace of the Church of England. I remember Dr. Pusey's famous letter to the Earl of Shaftesbury, inviting an armistice in the nascent strife about ceremonial, so that a coalition of High and Low Churchmen might crush the rising danger. And now, after five and twenty years, other voices are heard. From the University of Oxford, as much the recognized seat of Old Testament study as her sister university for New Testament research, voices of authority have been uttered, bidding us refrain alike from hasty alarm and premature judgment. And it is not only the scholars of European reputation, like Professors Cheyne and Driver, who speak to the learned world. Far more significant as a sign of the times is the change of front in a section of the Church, strong in numbers, in ability, in zeal, and in unquestioned devotion to the cause of what they hold to be the truth.

The theological heir of Dr. Pusey himself, the present Librarian of the Pusey House at Oxford, has recently edited a volume of essays, dealing himself in one of them with the questions of Inspiration and Biblical Criticism. A book which represents the joint work of men like Mr. Gore, Canon Scott Holland, Dr. Paget, the late Mr. Aubrey Moore, and others of equal calibre as scholars and theologians, and written for the general religious public, has a weight and claim to notice which few individual authors could obtain. The editor's essay on Inspiration has boldly accepted a position which is most startling to many of his readers. Differing widely from

the tone of the earlier "Essayists," he virtually accepts the same standpoint of the legitimacy of Biblical Criticism, which once evoked such a whirlwind of orthodox indignation. He urges that it is right to face the facts which criticism puts before us, and that it is safe for Christians to do so; and further, that by doing so, we enlarge and exalt our conception of the Old Testament. He points to the recognized value of investigations in the text of the New Testament, and asks for the same trustfulness in the case of Old Testament criticism, even if it has been hitherto marked by unwelcome and negative results. He declares "*that the modern development of historical criticism is reaching results as sure, when it is fairly used, as scientific enquiry.*"

It is hardly needful to state that my purpose, in calling attention to this remarkable work, is neither to invoke its authority, nor, on the other hand, to raise the pitiful cry of the heresy-monger against those with whom, on some of the deepest theological issues, I find myself at variance. I note it as a historical fact, a sign of the times: which it behoves us, as ministers and priests of Christ's Church, to take into earnest, prayerful consideration,—eliminating all personal aspects, all questions of party rivalry, all fears of man's approval or criticism, and discussing it this day in that spirit of "free discussion" which the object of our Association prescribes, and which can only be helpful and strengthening to ourselves, in gaining more and more insight into GOD'S Inspired Scriptures.

1. *What does Biblical Criticism mean? Whence did it take its origin? What is its present standing and acceptance, as regards both Old and New Testament?* These questions face us at the outset, and can be simply disposed of, as they are matters of pure fact, involving no controversial issues. Biblical Criticism means the honest application of processes of historical and philological enquiry to ascertain the true text and other literary facts concerning the Word of God. The *frame of mind* in which a man enters upon such a work, whether—as it should ever be, humble and devout, or, as it may sometimes have been, self-confident or even eager of personal distinction as a discoverer of new facts, these incidents have nothing to do with the value of the process itself. That would have to be judged upon issues entirely different, namely: whether the authority of GOD'S word stands and falls with questions of human authorship; whether the pillar and ground of our Faith would be imperilled by processes which human productions, like the Homeric poems, have so long and successfully withstood; and whether, finally, the meritorious and honourable anxiety for the due preservation of Scripture may not pass unconsciously to that letter-worship which the Bible itself condemns, and which the history of Jewish Talmudism exposes; may not imperceptibly impair and destroy the true theory of Divine Inspiration itself, which (as we all believe) finds its great analogy and parallel in the Mystery of the Incarnation, the union of Divinity and Humanity.

2. *What was the origin of Biblical Criticism?* It needs not to speak of facts so familiar as the labours of Origen (labours which the Church remembers with gratitude, as against some rash imaginings in other subjects), and the still greater efforts of Jerome. Do we not remember how, from the very first, these labours of the Western Father evoked the bitter opposition of his contemporaries, how he was reviled by them as a "*falsarius, sacrilegus, corruptor sanctarum scripturarum*"—abuse which the Saint acknowledged by calling his opponents "*aselli bipedes*"—a candour which I trust will not be imitated by the Biblical critics of our own day, when exposed to similar attacks. Little by little our New Testament grew into shape. Would that an Origen or a Jerome had gathered the materials which later ages have had to investigate and sift with such elaborate skill! The Middle Ages contributed little; but the Revival of Letters was fitly crowned by the labours of Erasmus, the Estiennes, and Cardinal Ximenes. All was yet confined to matters of *text*. Luther indeed uttered a deeper and freer theory of inspiration, but it was quickly smothered by those of his own side, who carried ideas of literal inspiration from Scripture even into the wording of their own formulas.

New Testament criticism seemed closed by the tacit adoption of the *textus receptus*. It was from the Church of Rome that the next impetus was to proceed. Richard Simon, a member of the Oratorian Order, in his *Critical History of the Old Testament*, developed a thought

which the learned Jew Kalonymus had uttered as far back as the 13th century, when he noted (in a letter to a friend) the use of *Jahveh* and *Elohim* in the book of Genesis.¹ Simon, followed later by the Roman Catholic physician Astruc, attempted to solve the difficulties of the narrative of Genesis, by the adoption of a theory of composite materials, now familiar to all students.² Censured by the theologians of their own Church, and ignored by Protestants, these investigations were suffered to fall, until in the next century, German scholars resumed them.³ But once more, the textual criticism of the New Testament had found zealous and able writers in England, the home of sound and accurate Biblical scholarship. Mill and Bentley paved the way, assisted by Bengel and Wetstein in Germany, for the later work of our present century, Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort; through whose efforts, under the providence of God we may feel that the Good Tidings of the New Covenant are placed before us with almost the identity of word and syllable.⁴ I turn now to the third preliminary question suggested.

3. *What is the present measure of acceptance, the attitude of the Church, to this study, and the work which it involves?* Nobody can deny that, in principle, the work *has* been accepted. Nobody can deny that, as regards the New Testament, the Church has very much modified her attitude from that which, a hundred years ago, would have been universal. Remember the vials of wrath which Archdeacon Travis hurled upon Porson

for his criticism upon the famous text of the Three Heavenly Witnesses. He, and the mass of the less-educated clergy, regarded the Greek *textus receptus*—that successful commercial venture of the enterprising Dutch printer Elzevir—as of inspired authority, and any criticism upon it as treason against God's word. Now, the least instructed of our students knows that this text was simply the recension of the French Reformer Beza; he knows the measure, whether of strength or deficiency of authority, which belongs to such passages as that of the Woman Taken in Adultery, the closing verses of St. Mark's Gospel, the famous *Θεός* in the last verse of 1 Tim. iii. There are many to whom these simple facts of Biblical knowledge are still unknown: as many sermons may still be preached on the "*almost persuaded*" of Agrippa, and other mistranslations which a more accurate scholarship has abandoned; but among the men who strive to fulfil their ordination vow to be "*diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same,*" the cause in itself is ended; they thankfully receive the result of past labours, and bring to their own study that more excellent spirit of reverent search which God rewards with Light. When, but recently, tidings reached us of the discovery of a new Uncial Codex of the 4th century; who felt alarmed, as men a century ago would have been terrified? We know that no honest investigation can hurt our edifice. Men may, indeed, imperil their own souls by irreverent and sceptical attacks, but nothing

shall prevail against that WORD which is eternal and unmovable as GOD himself.

Why, then, if on matters of New Testament criticism, there is such practical unanimity with regard to the acceptance of principle, even if there be difference as to the value of this or that reading,—why has the similar process, when applied to the Old Testament, evoked so much suspicion and hostility? It cannot be merely because questions of authorship are mainly involved, for we have long agreed to regard that of the Epistle to the Hebrews as an open question.

May the cause, in part, be deducible from the fact that the Old Testament is to many clergymen relatively a *terra incognita*, that while most of them have a working acquaintance with the text of our New Testament, many have to depend upon commentaries for the shades of Hebrew meaning. We remember how, before the Reformation, the formula "*Græcum est, non intelligitur*," settled at once any rash appeal from the Vulgate or the Schoolmen. We remember how the Evil Spirit was supposed by many to have invented Greek for the purpose of disturbing the leisure of monastic retirement. But these are not the examples which we desire to gain from past ages. The clergy should feel no jealousy of studies from which their own lack of leisure, their other duties, and not lack of inclination may sometimes restrain them. And they should wish God speed, surely, to all labours which have the Grace of God for their motive power, and the promotion of Truth for their object.

No one is expected to bind himself in advance, or at any time, to accept results which he cannot personally verify. I can well conceive a minister, through a long career, never once touching upon any aspect of criticism, speaking as it were only of the contents of the *Letter*, not of its *envelope*, or of the possible *amanuensis*. But when the other topic is forced upon his consideration, when a soul struggling with doubt, with fancied discrepancies or real difficulties, comes to his ghostly counselor, let him not give the stone of mere apologetic special pleading, or scornful condemnation, instead of the wholesome bread of a reasonable and sincere explanation.

Some of us may not be aware of the immense harm done to educated minds by forcing upon them supposed explanations which do not remove difficulties. We have abandoned, with regard to the supposed moral difficulties of the Old Testament those methods of casuistry by which Augustine and Chrysostom, for instance, justified Abraham's dealing with Hagar, or his denial of his wife.⁶ Surely it is time to abandon a similar method with regard to matters which belong to the domain of theological research. Take, for instance, the controversy as to the date of the Book of Daniel. I know of more than one theological student who examined this question with the sole aid of those treatises which strenuously uphold the earlier date. But they found their guides utterly at variance as to the reasons they allege, and even as to the solution of other difficulties we are familiar with, such as the presence

of Greek words, the identification of Belshazzar and Darius, or the like. Students, as I know, have been driven into a repudiation of the book simply from the impossibility of reconciling the differences of those advocates who agreed in nothing but in virulence against the supporters of the Maccabæan date. On any given point, they had found Dr. Pusey condemning Keil and Westcott, and the Speaker's Commentary, as much as these differed from himself.⁶ And then, the student perhaps learns for the first time that another theory of a later authorship is supported by no less learning, though with a less vigorous polemic, and he rushes over to that side. May I read to you the guarded and wise language, reflecting the true school of Biblical Criticism, uttered by Professor Stanton of Cambridge, in his Hulsean Lectures on the Jewish Messiah: "I avoid," he says, "making any assumption as regards the date of the Book of Daniel. It is assigned to the Maccabæan era even by many orthodox critics. The chief difficulty which the earlier date must have, consists in the fact that the communication of such detailed information about events in a comparatively distant future, would not be according to the laws of Divine Revelation which we trace in other cases." And, after stating various arguments on both sides, he sums up: "Possibly the truth may be in some medium view, the larger part being assigned to the time of the Babylonian captivity, while larger or smaller additions were subsequently made."⁷

And so with the Pentateuch. Nobody desires to

perplex the young or the old with theories of Jehovistic and Elohistie portions. But when a sincere enquirer comes to us, and tells us that he is perplexed by finding seemingly needless repetitions and discrepant narratives, as for instance in the story of the Flood and the Ark, is it candid to conceal from him that, by simply separating the Elohistie and Jehovistic portions, all the difficulty vanishes? We find that there are two distinct stories, each of which is intelligible and clear by itself, while the confusion is caused by the mingling together of the two.⁸

And there are many other instances where this resolution of the Text into component parts gets rid of difficulties for which no other satisfactory solution has been propounded. And so we find it accepted now that the documentary theory of the composition of the Pentateuch and other parts of the Old Testament may be regarded as one of the proved results of Biblical Criticism, and as one of the most important contributions which has been made in recent times to Biblical knowledge. In a paper read at the Reading Church Congress in 1883, and reprinted as the preface to his volume on Job and Solomon, Professor Cheyne makes "the confident assertion that if either exegesis or the Church's representation of religious truth is to make any decided progress, the results of the literary analysis of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua into several documents must be accepted as facts, and that theologians in the future must recognize at least three different sections interwoven into the present text, containing as many different conceptions of the religious development of Israel."

If there are any to whom such views come with novelty, and therefore perhaps with offence, let them remember that a policy of silence is no longer possible to the Church. We cannot keep the results of criticism, nor any of the scientific knowledge of the present day shut up (as it were) in a box. Nor, even if we could do so, ought we to desire it. All truth is GOD'S truth, and the Church and the world will be better for knowing it. And if they are to be known,—surely it is better that such truths should be learned from the Church, and her appointed ministers, than distorted, caricatured, exaggerated, from the columns of atheistical newspapers.

Some, there may be, who will exclaim: "*Is not this the down-grade theology we have heard about?*" It is not for me to offer myself as the champion of scholars like Dr. Cheyne, or Dean Perowne, or Mr. Gore. To dispute about nicknames is a folly only inferior to that of bestowing them. But, speaking for myself, I should be inclined to describe as "down-grade" that theology which abandoned spiritual liberty, and sank down upon the mere letter of the Bible; which preached the search of Scripture with one voice, and anathematized it with another; which tied the inestimable truth of GOD'S Inspiration to matters of human authorship; which professed to regard as vital bulwarks the heading of a Psalm, or the postscript of an Epistle; which offered as its solutions sophistries and special pleadings so pitiable that a lawyer would disdain to offer them to the most ignorant jury.

But it is an "up-grade" theology that I commend to

myself, and,—were I fitted to speak with authority,—I would commend to my brethren. A Biblical theology which takes as its starting point the teaching that GOD spake to the fathers in old time "*by divers portions and in divers manners*;" that many things were permitted for a time which later instruction would forbid; which looks not downward but upward, as it lifts up the heart to receive the Inspiration from on high; and like Jacob in his dream at Bethel, sees in God's revelation as it were a ladder reaching to the Heavens with the messengers of GOD, ascending and descending on it.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
From whence cometh my help."

[Two cautions are worthy of being impressed upon our minds at this present juncture. Firstly, of not being led away by any tide of fashion, or any personal allegiance of human respect, to accept results which have not yet fully passed through the test of devout and scholarly research. We should never trouble the minds of hearers, fed on the "milk" of plain Scriptural teaching, and the Church's simple requirements from her lay people, with topics and controversies, which need for due comprehension a grasp of historical facts which not all the clergy, and very few of their hearers, at present possess. Indeed we are not likely, at the present day, to be frightened by any theological novelty started in Germany, or any other country. The day has gone by when Dean Alford purveyed an indiscriminate supply of German exegesis, and respectfully refrained from any selection. At the present

day, an utterance from Oxford or Cambridge is more likely to "flutter the dovescots" of Leipzig and Jena than otherwise, and the traditions of sound English scholarship which, in Bentley's time, claimed and received authority over the world of letters, bid fair to return again in the still nobler field of theology and the study of Holy Scripture.

But with this caution, surely there is equal wisdom in refraining from any sneering condemnation of labours and results which our means of study do not enable us to verify. Let not history repeat itself in the matter of Biblical Criticism, as when, in the 17th century, many ecclesiastical writers, Roman and Protestant, denounced the great discovery of Galilei as an attack upon revealed truth; or the foolish sneers which, even in our own memory, assailed those researches of geology which are now the accepted facts of every child's education.

If we dispute the results, let it be in a tone of charity and reason, that elementary virtue of Christianity recommended by St. Paul, (*ἀληθεύειν ἐν ἀγάπῃ.*) There is abundant example of bitter controversy and the *rabies theologorum* which Melancthon deplored, but let it be banished from the hearts and practice of those who follow the example of Jesus.⁹

Therefore it may be wiser for us, for a time at least, to exercise forbearance, and our best eloquence may be silence. Many of these problems are not yet solved: some, perhaps, are insoluble. But do not let us be teaching now what we may have later to retract; do not

let us declare that to be God's Truth which may be only the "doctrines of men;" do not let us denounce as heretics and depravers of God's Word those who may be His most faithful and devout servants.]

May I conclude by uttering borrowed words,—words which have authority, words of one to whom I look as a second father, one who, as my Rector, soon after my entrance into ministerial life, gave me the priceless, though the unapproachable, example of the Christian scholar and the ideal parish minister; who, after being called later to the dignity of a Canonry at St. Paul's, has recently resigned to younger hands what to many men would have been a dignified sinecure; and now is passing the close of an active and distinguished life in the same earnest study which first marked the Cambridge Senior Classic, and the Headmaster who claimed a Benson and a Hatch for his pupils.

Called not long ago as Select Preacher before the University of Oxford, at the very time when all minds were excited and divided by the new controversy, and the extraordinary and perhaps salutary revolutions of party attitude which it has brought with it, he uttered these words of wise caution, and yet of noble confidence in the ultimate victory of truth:

"We live in an age of keen inquiry and wide research, stimulated by marvellous discoveries of things new and old, and rewarded, as no candid mind can doubt, by large and real progress in almost every branch of knowledge. Can we wonder, or need we fear, if at such a time that which is man's

highest concern becomes the subject of the most searching criticism and most eager speculation? What more natural source of the keenest enquiry than an ardent, fearless love of truth? or what more certain, to one who trusts the promise of our Lord, than that all such enquiry must bring out into clearer light that Truth into which His Spirit has been sent to guide us?

"To that Truth the most searching criticism *cannot* be destructive, need not be unfriendly. Be patient, therefore, with the enthusiasm, or even with the rashness, if such it seem to you, of those who feel themselves called to the most searching examination of those Scriptures, which are to us 'the words of eternal life.'

"Remember what Butler has so wisely taught us, that the only important question about Holy Scripture is, whether it *is* what itself claims to be, not whether it is in all respects what we may have imagined.

"Learn, therefore, to distinguish the solid substance and majestic form of Truth from the shadows which it casts both behind it and before, in ancient prejudice and novel theory. The prejudice may be erroneous, the theory imperfect, and both may pass away, but the word of God abideth for ever." *

* From a sermon preached at Great St. Mary's, Oxford, June 9, 1889, by Ven. Archdeacon Gifford.

NOTES.

¹ The remarkable letter was brought into notice by Prof. A. Neubauer (*Athenæum*, April 14, 1888). Kaloonymus says: "My honoured brother, a great and strong perplexity arose in my mind lately, concerning this chapter (Gen. i), which I think will not prove groundless, and of which I have not heard that any one took it up before me. This difficulty is the following: From the beginning of Genesis up to the passage of the Sabbath rest (ii. 1-3) only Elohim occurs and not once Jehovah. From ii. 4 to v. we find Jehovah-Elohim. From v. to vi. 9, only Jehovah is mentioned. * * * This strange use of the names of God cannot be accidental, but gives, according to my opinion, some hidden hints, which are too wonderful for me to understand."

² ASTRUC. Jean Astruc was born in Languedoc, 1684. His father had been a Huguenot, but had joined the Church of Rome soon after the birth of his son. Educated at Montpellier as a physician, Jean Astruc became professor in the medical faculty of Toulouse, and later was a royal physician of Paris, where he died in 1766. It was in 1753 that he published anonymously his "*Conjectures sur les mémoires originaux dont il paraît que Moïse s'est servi pour composer le livre de la Genèse.*" [Avec privilège et approbation.] It was not publicly identified with his name until a year after his death, then Lorry, in a biographical sketch, referred to his scruples about publishing the treatise. "Il était bien sûr de ses intentions, mais il avait peur que quelques esprits forts ne crussent pouvoir, de ses conjectures, tirer quelque induction contre la divinité des Livres saints. Il eut besoin d'être rassuré longtemps par des personnes pieuses et instruites, avant de donner cet ouvrage, qui n'est que curieux sans être dangereux." Astruc quotes Simon, LeClerc and Fleury, as predecessors who had already discussed the possibility of a composite authorship in the Pentateuch. He was not aware that, in the same year (1753) a Protestant, Peter Brouwer at Leyden, had treated of the same

topic in a dissertation "*qua disquiritur unde Moses res in libro Geneseos descriptas didicerit*," inferring that Moses had used older historical fragments, but firmly maintaining the "*historica veritas*" and "*divina origo*" of the book. Astruc divided Genesis into four sources (A, B, C, D), with some few passages marked as AB. After an elaborate analysis, he proceeds to refute Spinoza's theories of a post-exilic authorship, on the ground that the Samaritans would never have accepted such a work from the Jews.

³ RICHARD SIMON. Many causes combined to involve Simon's researches in a condemnation which Astruc afterwards escaped. His combative nature, and his share in the controversies of the day, made it impossible that any utterance of his should receive impartial consideration. The MS. of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* managed to pass the censure, and was printed. But Bossuet's influence was sufficient to suppress the edition in France, although reprints were issued in Holland soon afterwards. The supplementary work on the New Testament appeared later without hindrance. As a history of the text, Simon's work is admitted to have been a valuable contribution to theology; but some narrow partialities and antipathies, especially where the labours of the Jansenists were concerned, and his total lack of appreciation for patristic exegesis, deprived the work of a thoroughly scientific character. Criticisms from all quarters were not wanting, but for the shallowness of the 18th century his work was too learned to meet with real appreciation, whether of its stronger or weaker sides.

⁴ Johann Albrecht Bengel, the critic who, with one consent, stands first as a commentator upon the New Testament, did not escape bitter attacks in his own time from those who feared the possible results of his processes. When he published his edition of the New Testament in 1734, with its *apparatus criticus*, its departures from the *textus receptus* were denounced as treason to God's Word, as he relates. [*Vita auctoris*, § 35.] Bengel received these attacks very patiently, and declared: "I have suffered many hard words from those who are themselves God's children, and may have to endure more, until at last the truth shall prevail. * * * All truth brings suffering and contradiction with it."

⁵ PATRISTIC EXEGESIS. The reference is not so much to the overstrained allegorizing, as to the forced and unreal explanations of actions which are now understood in the light of God's gradual education of the human race. Cases in point are that of Augustine and Chrysostom, dealing with the action of Abraham in the case of Hagar, and in denying that Sara was his wife. See especially Augustine *De civit. Dei*, xvi. 25.

⁶ On the question of the identification of Belshazzar, for instance, Dr. Pusey decided for the eldest son of Nabunahit, (the Nabonidus of Berosus), Westcott for Evil-Merodach, Keil for Nabonadius, while the Speaker's Commentary candidly declares identification impossible. "It leaves the difficulties connected with the whole question altogether unanswered, * * * no identification is possible, and none is required."

⁷ "*The Jewish and the Christian Messiah.*" Edinburgh, 1886, p. 109 (note). It is a remarkable fact that the great Biblical scholar Franz Delitzsch, whose recent death was deplored by the whole Christian world, finally adopted (after long resistance) the belief that the book of Daniel was written in the Maccabæan period, placing it indeed in the year B. C. 168. His views experienced a similar change with regard to the Pentateuch, a portion of which he places in the time of Josiah, and some even later.

⁸ Taking the narrative of the Flood as it stands, regarding the book of Genesis as an organic whole, it is evident that the notes of time are confusing. There are frequent and perplexing repetitions.

"At one time two of every sort of creature are to be brought into the ark; at another it is seven pair of clean animals and two of unclean. In ch. viii., v. 5, we read that 'The waters decreased continually until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.' But later on, in the ninth verse of the same chapter, after forty days at least have elapsed, when the dove is sent forth from the ark she finds no rest for the sole of her foot, and returns again to the ark because 'the waters were on the face of the whole earth.' But let the students separate the Elohist and the Jehovistic sections in this narrative, and all

this difficulty vanishes almost completely away. The intervals of seven and forty days belong to one of these stories, and the system of dating by the days of the month ('the second month, the seventeenth day of the month;' 'in the tenth month, on the first day of the month,' &c.) belongs to the other story. He finds, moreover, that this system of dating by the days of the month gives an intelligible and satisfactory result when the seven days and the forty days are omitted, and that the seven and forty days gives a coherent chronology of its own to the other story. The 'two of every sort' of beasts belongs to one story, the 'seven clean' and the 'two unclean' to the other, and that other the one which leads on to the story of Noah's sacrifice on leaving the ark, while the story which has only 'two of every sort' belongs to the same chain of extracts in which the renewal of the covenant, when Noah leaves the ark, is marked by the rainbow, and which contains no mention of an animal sacrifice. The sending out of the raven and the dove is also found to belong to one narrative, and the appearance of the mountain tops above the water, which in the united narrative causes a contradiction, is found to belong to the other.

The case of the flood narrative is only one out of innumerable instances in which the analysis of the present text into its component parts gets rid of difficulties and explains puzzles for which no other satisfactory solution has been propounded. It is like untwisting a rope of many colours, and finding each strand of one colour come away by itself." [J. A. Cross, *Paper read before Leeds Clergy Club, 1886.*]

⁹ As a model in our own times of what Christian controversy should be, and the right tone and spirit by which questions of Biblical criticism may best hope for satisfactory solution, we may recall the memorable correspondence in the *Guardian* between the late Bishop Lightfoot and Canon Cook, the editor of the Speaker's Commentary, upon the true rendering of ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ in the Lord's Prayer, or the similarly friendly discussion between the late Professor Kennedy and Archdeacon Gifford. (*"Appello Caesarem,"* 1882.)